

September 13, 2001

**THE NEWARK
PRESERVATION
& LANDMARKS
COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 1066
Newark, N.J. 07101
(973) 622-4910**



Mr. Kamran Mirza
600 Bartholomew Road
Piscataway, N.J. 08854-8002

Dear Mr. Mirza:

This is in reply to your telephoned request for information about memorials for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I understand your inquiry is part of a statewide survey. As I explained, we are a small private organization whose activities are confined to Newark, and have no information on other communities.

Dr. King is commemorated at Newark City Hall by a permanent exhibition of photographs and historical material in the basement, and a bronze bust on the first floor. These memorials have been in place since 1989 and they are, as far as I know, the only ones within the city.

The exhibition features four glass display cases filled with newspaper articles and photos from Dr. King's last visit to Newark, on March 27, 1968, just eight days before his assassination. Hanging on the wall above the cases are large photographs by Robert Sengstacke of the 1965 Selma-Montgomery march and a 1968 demonstration in Memphis, shortly after Dr. King's death. Also on the walls are a framed copy of the "I Have a Dream" speech from the 1963 March on Washington, and several pieces of artwork. I have enclosed copies of a press release about the opening of the exhibit, and a few other items.

The bronze bust, approximately life size, sits atop a pedestal just inside the main entrance to City Hall. It was sculpted by Ray Warren of Princeton for the city's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Commission, which is no longer in existence. City Hall provides a splendid setting for these memorials. The building, at 920 Broad St., was opened in 1906 and is one of the finest examples of Beaux Arts architecture in New Jersey. It is on both the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places.

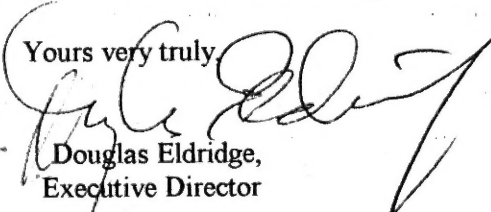
Elsewhere in Newark, Dr. King's name has been placed on a major thoroughfare (formerly High Street), the new Federal Courthouse at 50 Walnut Street, and an old public school at 109 South 9th Street.

For your information, I covered Dr. King's 1968 visit to Newark while I was a reporter for The Newark News, and I helped set up the City Hall exhibit while serving as an aide to Mayor Sharpe James in the late 1980s. If I can be of further help, please call me at (973) 674-8194. Best wishes for your research project.

Enclosures

CC: Charles Cummings, City Historian
Pamela Goldstein, Mayor's Office

Yours very truly,


Douglas Eldridge,
Executive Director